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dialectisch neben einander, cf. Hirsch, Dialect von Siena Zs. IX 513 ff.

Den Verben *joindre*, *oindre* u. ä. (nicht *prendre*, *prendre* u. ä.) folgten dann weiterhin ja auch *geindre*, *preindre*, *craindre*, etc., *joins*, *joint*—*joignent* (das vielleicht rein physiologisch aus *jungnt* entstanden ist)—*joindre*, *preins*, *preint*—*preignent*, *preindre*.

Umgekehrt ist ja mfrz., nfrz. *vaincre* nicht die allerdings im Consonantismus lautgesetzlich mögliche organische Fortentwicklung von *vinkere*, *vinkre*, weil ein Infinitiv mit *c* im ältesten Französisch fehlt (cf. Foerster in Zs. I 562 und G. Paris, Romania I 306). Der *k* Laut in *vaincre* ist auch erst wieder hergestellt nach den vielen anderen Formen mit *k* (*vainquons*, *vainquez*, etc.).

Wie unsicher überhaupt das afrz. Sprachgefühl in Bezug auf die Verba mit radicalem Sonorlaut und mit Sonorlaut+Dental oder Guttural war, ist bekannt. Vergl. bes. die interessanten Formen *argoit*, *argent*, *argamment*, *ahergoient* (Tobler in Zs. II 625) und die treffliche Arbeit von Risop über "die analogische Wirksamkeit in der Entwicklung der franz. Conjugation" in Zs. VII 45 ff.

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GERMAN GRAMMARS AND TEXT BOOKS.

The success of our efforts in promoting a thorough, scientific study of the modern languages depends very much upon the character of those elementary books which lay the foundation for all future linguistic development in our youth. There is probably no conscientious teacher of experience who does not heartily agree with us that pupils, spoiled by superficial or unmethodical elementary instruction, can be cured only in very exceptional cases. They are a constant drag to the class, trying tests of the teachers patience, living specimens of pedagogical original sin. Stolid indifference or haughty pride, however, seem to have prevented those who were naturally called to do so, from raising their voice against existing evils. They must, therefore, not complain of the discredit into which the study of modern languages has frequently fallen.

The following lines are presented as a humble attempt at atonement in the German department.

The growing influence of German science upon our own mental development, the attention, on this account, given to the German language in our colleges, the constant increase of the German population in our country, have from more than one point of view caused a great demand for means of imparting a knowledge of the German language. Our publishers, eager to do the business, naturally looked for men to manufacture the desired goods. We cannot pretend that in their choice they have always been led by the maxim, that only the most experienced hand is able to furnish the material for elementary instruction. And who would blame the poor fellow who taught some lady pupil the magic phrase "ich liebe dich," found it successful in every respect, and afterwards sold his "new method" to an enterprising publisher?

In its proper sphere this mercantile spirit of treating educational affairs may be in its place. The ambitious clerk who wishes to satisfy his customers, the young lady who longs to tell her friends that "she is studying German," desires nothing more than one of those natural methods for babes which are springing up like weeds all over the country. To introduce this spirit, however, into our schools and colleges, which are called to teach our youth the methods of mental labor, simply means introducing poison.

One of the most fundamental and destructive errors thus spread by pedagogical quacks and enterprising manufacturers of school books is the principle of making the study of the German language as easy as possible. And this is attained not by a systematic arrangement and concise representation of the grammatical material, with which we would heartily agree, but by yielding to a superficiality which proves contagious to all other branches of study. Some authors even state quite boldly that they do not believe in a profound and comprehensive knowledge of German, as it would overburden the memory. This latter point, while an effective scare-crow for over-cautious parents, really hides their utter incompetency and represents the college as a hospital for

weak-minded youth. We all are convinced that "we only know in part," but we have to uphold the ideal of a comprehensive knowledge. The criterion of usefulness has to be strictly excluded from science as well as from art. It is entirely subjective and may be applied with as much right by the pupil as by the teacher. And where shall we arrive, if it is left for the immature student to decide what seems useful for him to study?

One of the results of the error just stated is the wide-spread belief, especially among students, that German is an easy language, the study of which ranks far below that of baseball. Having armed themselves with the knowledge that appeared useful to them and some large dictionary they attack the current texts. Their memory retains only a few of the words looked up, for "of what use are they?" Eagerly they devour the scanty "notes," which are mostly "Eselsbrücken," and laboriously stumble through the text, satisfied if they "get the general run of the story." Now they have read the "classics" and "attained a reading knowledge of German." Were it not for an occasional conscientious teacher who tries to amend the sins of grammars and texts, many students would never be introduced into the spirit of the language with its subtilegrammatical constructions, shading of synonyms, meaning of idioms, peculiarities of style, etc.

Looking over the text-books and grammars which have come to our notice or been recently sent to us, we cannot, for the reasons just stated, advocate a general protection of our home industry. For nearly all the books of this kind produced in England are far superior to most of those manufactured in our own country. To illustrate this we need only compare the barren deserts which greet us in the 'notes' to many texts in Henry Holt's series, the unpedagogical garrulity in books of other firms, with the excellent scholarly work in the editions of C. A. Buchheim, (Oxford, Clarendon Press: Egmont, Iphigenie, Tell, Nathan, Minna von Barnhelm, etc.). And while we heartily recommend his texts for use in the class room, we would humbly advise our own future editors to learn from him how to write concise introductions and to add "notes" which, avoiding the character of "Eselsbrücken," are a constant stimulus for the student to penetrate into the

spirit of the language and the author. Of similar commendable editorship are the readers and texts published by Macmillan & Co., (Faust, Heine, Reisebilder, Lyrical Poems of Schiller, etc.), and the Cambridge University Press (Hermann und Dorothea, Riehl's Novellen, etc.). All the editions of English origin, besides, offer a beautiful German print, while many of our American texts are in this respect simply miserable.

We should, however, be doing an injustice if we did not mention here certain laudable efforts in the right direction. D. C. Heath & Co. (Boston) have sent us several of their publications which may justly be called such. In their selection of Grimm's Märchen the teacher will find an excellent book for beginners in reading German, and it remains for him to make these simple classic stories, full of idioms and charms of style satisfactorily explained in the "notes," an effective means of instruction. A work of similar value is the Course in Scientific German by H. B. Hodges, although it might be improved by substituting careful "notes" for the vocabulary and by leaving out the questions in the first part, which, like all such questions, are an insult to an intelligent teacher.

Both books, however, are only beginnings and we are still in want of a whole series of good text-books which would gradually introduce the pupil into the riches of the German language both as to form and contents. For the latter, too, must be considered, if we intend to compete successfully with the instruction in the classical languages. The editor of such a series must needs be a man of intimate acquaintance with the development of the German language and literature, of great pedagogical experience, and of an equally scholarly equipment.

The mercantile spirit characterised above has made itself felt also in the manufacture of German grammars. We are speaking here, of course, of books used for fundamental instruction and naturally exclude grammars of real excellence like Whitney's and especially Brandt's (N. Y., C. P. Putman's Sons). It was here where speculation found its most fertile field and the patent methods and systems are still flourishing under various disguises. Some of these, as, for example, the grammar in Worman's worthless series, were almost literal copies of Otto's German Grammar, expressly

and fortunately imported by one of our publishers, probably because none of our domestic manufacturers could produce anything better. We do not deny the practical value of Otto's grammar, but every teacher who has ever used it will certainly agree with us that it suffers from an almost intolerable diffuseness and a delightfully naïve innocence in respect to modern grammatical investigation.

Again we find that in England there is better work done than here. As the best of German grammars recently published there, that of Prof. A. L. Meissner, of Belfast, is now being reprinted in this country by D. C. Heath & Co., Boston. We only call the attention of our readers to it, reserving all criticism until it has been re-issued.

There seems to be no reason why we cannot produce in America an elementary German grammar based upon recent linguistic research, concisely and pedagogically arranged in every respect, and above all avoiding silly examples which disgust youth. A wide field is here open for excellent authors and enterprising firms to introduce a most necessary reform, and in particular we look with interest to the important movement in this direction recently announced by D. C. Heath & Co., covering a wide field and including, as editors, many of the leading college professors of the country.

JULIUS GOEBEL.

NOTES ON THE FINNSAGA.

II.

One of the most disputed passages in the Finnsburg fragment is line 5: "*ac her forð berað, fagelas singað*," "but here they bear forth, the birds sing." All editors are unanimous in declaring that the passage, as it stands, gives no sense; some propose a change of one or more words; others again accept the manuscript reading but assume a gap of two half lines after it, so that the words "*fagelas singað*" would be the second half of the following line. But our inability to interpret a passage may be due as much to our inadequate knowledge of the language as to a defect in the manuscript reading; changes of the latter ought, therefore, to be resorted to in extreme

cases only. The assumption of a gap, on the other hand, would be justified only if the alliteration were missing; but the line is metrically correct.

I wish to suggest an explanation which will obviate all changes in the original text. The chief objection against the manuscript reading has been considered the lack of an object of "*berað*." But there can be little doubt that "*beran*," although in the vast majority of cases signifying to bear, to carry, was also used in Anglo-Saxon as an intransitive verb of motion, particularly (if not exclusively) with adverbs of direction. Grein, in his *Sprachschatz*, adduces two instances which clearly show the intransitive force of *beran*; Elene 42 ff: *pa se casere heht... guðgelæcan... bannan to beadve, beran ut præce rincas under roderum*," and Andreas 1220ff: *com verod unmaete mid lindgecrode, bæron ut hræðe and þam halgan handa gebundon*." These instances are, moreover, exactly parallel with line 5 of the Finnsburg fragment; in both of them *beran* is used of a body of warriors, as is also the case in our passage; in both of them furthermore *beran* is specified by the adverb "*út*," analogous with the "*forð*" of the line under discussion. Our theory is further corroborated by the fact that the same verb also occurs in other Germanic languages as an intransitive; thus in Old High German (*beran* or *peran*, with the signification of *nasci*, *apparere*, *crescere*) and in Old Norse (*bera*) where it is besides quite common as an impersonal verb (cf. Egilson, "*ferð bar á flótta*," "populus in fugam coniectus est." Magnus Saga Hins Berfætta 13). Last but not least, I refer to the use of to bear as an intransitive in modern English, in a figurative as well as a literal signification (the latter particularly in nautical terms); it is always followed by a preposition or an adverb of direction (as in Anglo-Saxon), sometimes by both: 1) to bear upon (on), towards, against, etc. 2) to bear down, up, in (away, off, back,) etc. 3) to bear down upon, in with, up against, up to, etc.

The absence of a subject to *berað* in our passage is nothing extraordinary; the personal pronouns *he*, *heo* and *hie* were quite commonly omitted in Anglo-Saxon when the meaning was clear from the context. We see from the context of our passage that Hengest was fully expecting an attack from the Frisians; if he,